



MINUTES
Board of Water Commissioners
Public Works Conference Room
630 Garden Street
February 9, 2009 3:00 p.m.

- COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: James Smith, Barry Keller, Landon Neustadt, Russell Ruiz
- COUNCILMEMBER PRESENT: Iya Falcone
- STAFF PRESENT: Rebecca Bjork, Water Resources Manager; John Schoof, Wastewater System Manager; Cathy Taylor, Water System Manager; Bill Ferguson, Water Resources Supervisor; Anne Van Belkom, Administrative Assistant
- PUBLIC: Charles Hamilton, Carpinteria Valley Water District; Steve Little; Paul Hernadi; Dr. Edo McGowan.
1. **CALL TO ORDER:** The meeting was called to order at 3:02 p.m. Ms. Falcone expressed her regret that Commissioner Rees had resigned from the Water Commission and was not present at today's meeting. Ms. Falcone had hoped to be able to thank Commissioner Rees in person for her dedication and her hard work.
 2. **CHANGES TO THE AGENDA:** None.
 3. **COMMENTS BY THE PUBLIC:** Mr. Little suggested that staff consider investigating the possibility of raising the Bradbury and Gibraltar Dams by 50 feet in order to increase future drought protection.
 4. **MEETING MINUTES, JANUARY 08, 2009:** The minutes were revised as follows: Agenda Item #10, Sentence 1, was modified to read "The EIR's NOP is scheduled *to be completed* on January 14 and is open for public comment until *February 13*, 2009. MOTION (Ruiz/Neustadt 3-0-1, with Keller abstaining): to approve the minutes as revised.
 5. **CONTRACT FOR DESIGN OF HEADWORKS SCREENING:** Mr. Schoof described the contract with Carollo Engineering to design a replacement Headworks screen, conveyance, and washer compacter system for El Estero Wastewater Treatment Plant. Staff will present this contract for Council approval on February 24, 2009. Currently funds are available for design but not for construction. MOTION (Ruiz/Neustadt 4-0-0): to recommend approval of the contract with Carollo Engineering.
 6. **SHEFFIELD RESERVOIR NATIVE GRASS PROJECT:** Ms. Taylor described the Native Grass Project at Sheffield Reservoir that will replace the grass in the front lawn with either Rusty Sedge or Field Sedge in order to conserve 50-70% of the water requirements for the existing lawn.
 7. **PLAN SANTA BARBARA EIR-Water Resources Division Comments on Notice of Preparation.** The issue as to whether the Desalination Plant should be considered as a water supply in the baseline conditions for environmental review was discussed at length by Water Commissioners. There was discussion about the desalination plant to be a drought supply rather than a regular supply. Councilmember Falcone suggested that staff may wish to invite Bettie Weiss, City Planner, to attend a future Water Commission meeting to further discuss the entire EIR process. The Commission did not choose to make a recommendation on this item.
 8. **PLAN SANTA BARBARA EIR – Water Commission Comments on Notice of Preparation:** Commissioner Ruiz summarized his personal comments regarding the Notice of Preparation, which were distributed to Commissioners as a part of the January 12, 2009 agenda packet. In addition, he requested that Water Commissioners consider acting on his draft of the "Proposed Water Commission Comment to General Plan Update EIR NOP," which was also included in that packet. After discussion, Commissioner Ruiz's draft comments were revised as follows: 1) The comment would be changed to reflect that it comes from the Water Commission instead of from Mr. Ruiz; and 2) The last paragraph, with the exception of the first sentence, would be deleted. A second sentence would be added to the last paragraph stating that if additional expenditures were authorized for the desalination plant, the facility may be included in the water supply baseline figure. MOTION (Ruiz/Neustadt 4-0-0): to recommend approval of the revised Water Commission comments on the Notice of Preparation for the Plan Santa Barbara EIR.

9. **PROPOSED WATER AND WASTEWATER RATE RESOLUTION:** Ms. Bjork summarized proposed Water and Wastewater Rates and explained the need for increases in water and wastewater rates. Ms. Bjork also explained that staff is recommending changes to the buy-in fees for Water and Sewer to more equitably distribute invested costs between current and future customers. There was no recommendation made at this time since the City Administrator's recommended budget, including proposed rate changes, will be reviewed by the Water Commission at a later date. Commissioner Neustadt asked staff to distribute the actual marked up copy of the rate increases to the Water Commission. In addition, the subcommittee on agricultural water rates will meet shortly to discuss agricultural rate increases.
10. **GIBRALTAR STATUS:** Ms. Bjork reported on the status of Gibraltar Reservoir. Levels of dissolved organic material continue to be high at Gibraltar and will only be reduced with a spill of the reservoir. She reported on discussions with the County Water Agency regarding long term (20-40 years) water supply planning. Staff is still submitting DSR's to the State for reimbursement of additional costs associated with loss of capacity at Gibraltar.
11. **RESIGNATION OF COMMISSIONER KATE REES:** Ms. Bjork informed the Water Commission of the resignation of Commissioner Rees and noted that her resignation letter was included in the packet. It is anticipated that Council will appoint a replacement for Commissioner Rees in June 2009.
12. **WATER RESOURCES MANAGER'S REPORT:** Ms. Bjork distributed and reviewed the monthly Water Resources Manager's report on water production, rainfall, and wastewater influent, noting a slight decline in water production despite very dry conditions. Commissioner Ruiz presented a memo to staff which listed several topics he requested to be placed on the March 2009 agenda.
13. **DATE OF NEXT SCHEDULED MEETING:** It was confirmed that the next meeting was scheduled for March 9, 2009, at 3:00 p.m.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:35 p.m.

AVB